

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 25, 2010

The City Council Transportation Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met at 5:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building Conference Room on the 25th day of February 2010, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray and the Norman Public Library at 225 North Webster 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Councilmembers Butler, Cubberley, and Chairman Quinn
MEMBERS ABSENT:	Councilmember Kovach
OTHERS PRESENT:	Ms. Theta Dempsey, Current OU Parking and Transportation Administrator Mr. Kris Glenn, Marketing Assistant for OU Mr. Jacob Hardy, OU Student Mr. Zachary Hedrick, OU Student Ms. Chelsey Kraft, OU Student Mr. Angelo Lombardo, Traffic Engineer Ms. Betty Love, Assistant to Theta Dempsey, CART Mr. Paul Minnis, Bicycle Advisory Committee Mr. Kyran Mish, Bicycle Advisory Committee Chair Mr. Rick Moranon, <u>The Oklahoma Daily</u> Ms. Janice Oak, Progressive Independence Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works Mr. Doug Myers, New OU Parking and Transportation Administrator Ms. Linda Price, Revitalization Manager Mr. Evan Stair, Vice President, Northern Flier Alliance, Inc. Mr. Wayne Wickman, OU Transit Operations Manager Ms. Syndi Runyon, Administrative Technician IV

PRESENTATION OF A PROPOSAL FROM THE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR BIKE LANES.

Mr. Angelo Lombardo, Traffic Engineer, said the current Bike Plan, which includes a map of bike lanes has not been updated since the 1990's and some bike lanes existed prior to the Bike Plan. He said those bike lane markings have faded over time. The Bicycle Advisory Committee's (BAC) goal was to look for areas to test a Bike Lane Restriping Pilot Program and asked the Traffic Engineering Division for their help in identifying how the old lanes could be reestablished. Mr. Lombardo said adding bike lanes would help increase Norman's status from "Honorable Mention" to a higher level in the Bicycle Friendly Community Program. He said funding in the approximate amount of \$65,956.84 is available in the unused portion of the Bike Route Improvements Project. He said the only drawback to bike lanes in some areas will be restricted parking if not already restricted by signage. He said the Traffic Division and Parks Department have worked together to verify old lane locations and where additional bike lanes could be added to link the old lanes together or extend the old lanes to the major collector streets in areas that already have a bike route. Mr. Lombardo displayed an amended map of bike lanes and said lanes are only shown on streets with adequate width and other bike lane markings will be included in the striped lanes at regular intervals to re-enforce the visual impact of the lanes. He reviewed the streets that would be re-striped as well as proposed new bike lanes. He said speed humps will have to be modified for the safety of the bicyclists and Chairman Quinn asked if funding for that would also come from the Capital Fund and Mr. Lombardo said it would. He said old lanes along Brooks Street that enter the University of Oklahoma (OU) campus are proposed as one part of OU's larger campus plan to create a bike and pedestrian route between the main campus and new developments on south campus. He said the major addition of bike lanes will be along both sides of George Avenue just south of the OU Duck Pond.

He said bike lanes will also be in front of Monroe Elementary where the City currently allows parents to pick up and drop off children in a restricted parking area; however, if that is a designated bike lane the City will need to revisit that issue.

Councilmember Cubberley said he has problems with striping both sides of George Street due to parking issues. He said many of the driveways are not deep enough to handle all the parking needed and restricting parking on both sides of the street will anger the neighborhood. Mr. Jud Foster, Director of Parks and Recreation, said that information is being passed on to the engineers working with OU to explore placing both bike lanes on the east side of George Street because OU property is not developed. Councilmember Cubberley said the City needs to be sensitive to this type of parking issue. Chairman Quinn asked if OU had any plans to develop the property on the east side of George Street and Councilmember Cubberley said, if they do, it would probably be inward facing rather than street facing, but he is still opposed to restricting parking in that area. Mr. Lombardo said George Street could be a bike route, which would not create a parking issue, but if there is enough width, there can be a bike lane and parking. Ms. Theta Dempsey, OU Parking and Transportation Administrator, said OU is very interested in the bike lane project and would be amenable to allowing the City to extend the width on the east side. Mr. Lombardo said if Councilmembers do not want to inconvenience anyone with restricted parking, the City and BAC can propose no lanes for those areas. Mr. Paul Minnis, BAC member, said OU will be signing a contract in March with an engineering company for a Master Bicycle Plan so this would be a good time to talk with OU regarding these issues. Mr. Lombardo said once plans are finalized, the BAC could bring the plans back to the Transportation Committee prior to forwarding to City Council for approval. Chairman Quinn suggested Staff visit with neighborhoods affected by restricted parking for their input and Mr. Lombardo agreed.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint entitled, "Norman Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) Report"

DISCUSSION REGARDING CART RIDERSHIP REPORT INCLUDING SAFERIDE AND EXTENDED SERVICE.

Chairman Quinn asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the ridership reports for December 2009, and January, 2010, and there were none.

Items submitted for the record

1. Cleveland Area Rapid Transit Total Weekday Passenger Trips and Average Daily Passenger Trips FY 2010; Cleveland County Express, January – December 2009 and 2010; Little Axe Link, January – January - December 2009 and 2010; and West Norman Link November – December 2009 and January – December 2010

UPDATE FROM EVAN STAIR FROM THE NORTHERN FLYER ALLIANCE REGARDING THE EXPANSION OF AMTRAK SERVICES FROM OKLAHOMA CITY TO WICHITA, KANSAS.

Mr. Evan Stair, Vice President, Northern Flyer Alliance, Inc., (NFA) said the NFA is working to expand the Amtrak passenger rail service from Norman to Wichita and Kansas City. He said the NFA would like City Council to approve a resolution encouraging the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the State Legislature to look into high speed rail designation through Wichita to Kansas City and he would help Staff draft a resolution. He said the NFA mission is to advocate expansion of Amtrak service the NFA is reviewing a new train between Kansas City, Wichita, Oklahoma City, Norman, and Fort Worth. He said the NFA wants to fill a service gap between Oklahoma City and Newton, Kansas. Mr. Stair said the Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau (NCVB) stated they and the City of Norman would embrace Amtrak service more if the train schedule was flipped to provide second frequency Amtrak service through Norman.

He highlighted the four possible travel schedule scenarios as follows:

- ❖ Scenario A – Heartland Flyer would retain the same route and schedule without an additional train
- ❖ Scenario B – Two trains operating between Kansas City and Oklahoma City and meeting in Oklahoma City and trade passengers
- ❖ Scenario C – Three trains traveling between Kansas City, Fort Worth, Norman, and Oklahoma City
- ❖ Scenario D – Three trains with no trains passing through Oklahoma City or Norman

Mr. Stair said the NFA has received over eighty resolutions of support from corridor communities and civic organizations from Kansas City to the Fort Worth area. He said the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), ODOT, and Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Amtrak Study is due by the end of the month and the NFA has worked with the University of Kansas to produce a Return on Investment Study to show the benefits to the communities. He said Kansas Legislation is moving quickly to create a Passenger Rail Program and a Passenger Rail Revolving Fund, which has passed in the Senate and is now in front of the House Transportation Committee for a March 3rd hearing. He said House Bill KS-HB-2552 passed in the House, which allows Kansas to join ten other midwest states in the Midwest Passenger Rail Commission to develop a passenger and high speed rail programs in the midwest. He said this Commission was influential in obtaining \$2.6 billion of the \$8 billion in high speed rail stimulus funds. Mr. Stair said KDOT, ODOT, and TxDOT Draft Study is being reviewed by KDOT. He said the University of Kansas Study depicts a 3.2:1 economic impact over ten years and a full economic recovery of all capital costs after the first year of operation. He said the Study only looked at Kansas City, Wichita, and Oklahoma City so Norman was not included; however, he feels the economic gains would apply to Norman as well. Mr. Stair said Oklahoma applied for \$2 billion for a high speed rail route between Tulsa and Oklahoma City to be built on the north side of the Turner Turnpike, but did not receive the funding; however, Kansas City received a \$250,000 Service Development Plan for rail service between Kansas City, Wichita, Oklahoma City, and Fort Worth. He said this is a 50-50 plan and the states of Kansas and Oklahoma have said they will provide \$125,000 each to match the federal requirements. He said Texas received \$4 million to upgrade the rails between Fort Worth and the Oklahoma line so passenger trains will be running 80 miles per hour. He said Trinity Rail Express, which operated between Dallas and Fort Worth received \$7 million although Texas originally requested \$1.8 billion, they only received \$11 million. Mr. Stair said the NFA believes the Federal Railroad Administration is sending a signal to the region that states need to work together. He said the high speed rail designation is prioritized as grade crossing separations so future projects like the Robinson Street Underpass Project will be eligible for funding through high speed rail designation. Councilmember Cubberley requested that that a sample resolution be provided and Mr. Stair said that would be done. Chairman Quinn said he would not be in favor of supporting something that did not stop in Norman and Mr. Stair said Norman is already on the South Central High Speed Rail Corridor, and supporting a corridor between Kansas City and Oklahoma City would improve Norman's chances.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint entitled, "Northern Flyer Alliance, Inc., Intercity Rail Expansion," dated February 25, 2010, presented by Evan Stair, Vice President

PRESENTATION BY KRIS GLENN, MARKETING AND PROMOTIONAL REPRESENTATIVE (PR) SPECIALIST, ON CART'S WEST NORMAN LINK WORKSHOPS.

Mr. Kris Glenn, Marketing Assistant for OU, said CART transports more than one million passengers each year and features six Norman routes, three University campus routes, two rural Cleveland County routes, and a commuter route to Oklahoma City. He said many buses go to new citizens homes, and retail locations and only cost fifty cents while helping the environment since one bus replaces an average of forty-five cars. He said CART recently added a new route, the first in sixteen years, named West Norman Link that provides service to northwest Norman along 36th Avenue N.W., Tecumseh Road, 24th Avenue N.W., Robinson Street, and Interstate Drive. He said the key stops are the Norman Regional Healthplex, Embassy Suites, University Northpark, Sooner Mall, and residences along 36th Avenue N.W. Mr. Glenn said CART uses the work Link because the route links to the Main Street

route. He said the route runs every thirty minutes and the timing was designed for convenient, user-friendly connectivity to ensure riders wait only approximately fifteen minutes for each route. Mr. Glenn said several workshops were conducted to teach employees and citizens within the West Norman Link route that were unfamiliar with public transportation. The workshops covered many issues of riding the bus from accessing bus schedules to transferring to other routes. He said citizens riding the West Norman Link pay fifty cents and request a transfer slip that allows them to transfer to another route without paying again. He said CART prides itself on customer service and their bus drivers are the best on the front line of promoting that ideology.

Chairman Quinn asked if CART made presentations to representatives of Sooner Mall and Mr. Glenn said they have not but agreed that would be a good idea. Chairman Quinn said a Sooner Mall stop is an important stop and should be marketed and Mr. Glenn agreed and said Sooner Mall is a transfer point so it would be important to talk with them. Councilmember Butler said every Thursday, the Norman Public Library has story time at Sooner Mall and sixty to seventy children attend every week and felt it may be beneficial to promote that. Mr. Glenn said CART started partnering with the Library three months ago and have not publicized that much because it has not been needed. He said the first Saturday of every month there is a "read and ride" on the bus. He said the Main Street bus goes by the Library at 11:10 a.m. and children sign up in advance to ride and an employee from the Library reads stories to them and makes it fun by playing the YMCA song when they drive by the YMCA and the children sing along. He said CART will start featuring books on the bus on the Main Street route as a pilot program that will offer library books for riders. He said the riders can read while riding and can take the books with them and bring back or keep them. He said the children's read and ride has a waiting list for two months out so it is very successful without promotion.

Mr. Stair asked if CART had contact with Amtrak regarding a bus stop near the Norman Depot and Mr. Glenn said there is a stop less than a block from the Depot, but felt that CART could promote it more.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint entitled, "West Norman Link Workshop," dated February 25, 2010

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.